

# APPENDIX E

## LAND USE AND CIRCULATION MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

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### **INTRODUCTION**

### **TRANSPORTATION GOAL**

### **LAND USE AND CIRCULATION MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Several important resources have allowed cities to grow as they have: abundant land, convenient automobile transportation, and cheap energy. However, these resources are becoming scarce. Clean air, for example, is not an unlimited resource, and traffic congestion cannot be solved simply by building more and wider roads. To plan urban growth in a way that protects clean air and permits convenient travel within and among communities will require a new way of looking at the urban growth process. In particular, we must recognize that air quality, land use and circulation cannot be considered as separate issues. The relationship between them must be reflected in the plans and programs administered by cities, the County and the District.

As urban development is spread out over the landscape, the distance between home and work, school, medical care, shopping facilities, recreation and personal services becomes greater. A dispersed development pattern increases our reliance on automobile travel which, combined with longer trips, results in more air pollution. To reduce the number of trips and vehicle miles traveled (VMT), urban development should be managed to encourage development of compact communities that provide a balance of housing and jobs, while fostering the use of alternatives to the automobile.

It is not expected that all of the measures proposed here will be uniformly implemented by the affected jurisdictions due to differences in geography, community character, existing facilities and funding. However, cooperation and coordination between jurisdictions will be essential to ensure that a jurisdiction is not placed at a competitive disadvantage if a measure is not applied consistently across the region.

**2. TRANSPORTATION GOAL**

Surveys show that countywide, the Average Vehicle Ridership (AVR) during morning commute hours on highways is about 1.3, and commuting to work and school accounts for about one-quarter of all trips and VMT. This means that over 80% of the vehicles driven for those trips have only one occupant. While some use is made of alternate transportation modes, most people choose the convenience and apparent economy of the private auto. Since the end of World War II, private auto use has been institutionally supported by all levels of government, with limited development of other transportation alternatives. While this has helped society achieve unprecedented mobility, significant air pollution has also resulted.

In recognition of this, the CCAA requires all nonattainment districts to adopt and implement all “reasonably available transportation control measures sufficient to substantially reduce the rate of increase in passenger vehicle trips and miles traveled per trip...” (H&SC Sec. 40918). The California Air Resources Board has defined a ‘substantial reduction’ as holding the rate of growth of vehicle travel in urban areas to the rate of population growth. Thus, the transportation goal of the CAP is to reduce and maintain the rate of increase of vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) to the rate of population growth within San Luis Obispo County.

**3. LAND USE AND CIRCULATION MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS**

The land use management section of this document suggests ways of changing the arrangement and distribution of land uses to reduce dependence on the private auto and enhance the viability of alternate forms of transportation. The circulation management section presents measures that promote the use of transportation alternatives such as buses, bicycles, and walking. Ultimately, it is this link between land use and transportation planning that is necessary to maintain clean air.

### **L-1 Planning Compact Communities**

The growth of cities and communities in this county and throughout the state has been characterized by the growth of suburbs and suburban sprawl. Spread out communities require longer travel distances between home, work, school and shopping. In general, the more compact a community is, the lower its vehicle trips and VMT and the easier it is to use alternative forms of transportation such as transit, bicycling or walking. In the end, vehicle use and emissions are reduced.

Planning compact communities also means that urban development should happen within communities where the full range of services are available. The dispersal of households over vast rural areas of San Luis Obispo County, remote from services, will increase VMT and cause more air pollution.

Typical lower density suburban neighborhoods often fall just below the population-to-area ratio needed for effective bus service. Studies show that residential zoning densities of at least 7 dwellings per gross acre can create new transit options, such as dial-a-ride, regional fixed routes, and other demand-response services. Flexibility in lot configurations combined with quality design can create neighborhoods that are both attractive and transit-friendly.

For medium to higher density residential areas, a density of 15 units per acre or more supports a high level of transit service, especially if clustered around a transit facility. Discouraging lower density development in medium to higher density zones helps create compact areas that serve as focal points for fixed-route transit service.

In downtown commercial areas, a density of 50 or more employees per gross acre, or a floor area ratio of 1.0 or greater, supports a high level of transit service, especially if clustered around a transit facility. Discouraging lower density development in commercial zones helps create compact, activity centers that serve as focal points for transit service.

It is not envisioned that communities will become uniformly dense. Instead, dwelling units for those who prefer higher density living will be clustered in urban core areas, thus creating a market for convenience retailing and services that contribute to the richness of an urban life-style. As commercial facilities become integrated with residential development in a mixed-use development pattern, the need to use an automobile for routine trips diminishes.

***Policies***

- *Cities and unincorporated communities should be developed at densities that reduce trips and travel distances and encourage the use of alternative forms of transportation.*
- *Urban growth should occur within the urban reserve lines of cities and unincorporated communities. Rural areas of the county should be maintained as open space, agricultural lands and very low density residential development (20 acre or larger parcel size).*
- *Local planning agencies should encourage walking and transit use by planning neighborhoods and commercial centers at densities to allow for convenient access to and use of local and regional transit systems.*

***Implementation***

- A. Local jurisdictions should adopt programs and standards that foster the development of vacant or underdeveloped land within existing community boundaries (infill property).
- B. Local jurisdictions should amend their land use regulations to allow higher density residential and commercial development when:
  - 1. Urban services are capable of supporting higher densities.
  - 2. The development of higher densities is acceptable to the community and will not damage the character of historic areas in the community.
  - 3. The development has convenient access (within a 5 minute walk) to alternative means of transportation such as transit.
  - 4. The project applicant participates in affordable housing or transit enhancement programs.
- C. Local jurisdictions should strive to achieve higher densities in urban core areas in support of the regional transit system by:
  - 1. Facilitating transfers of development rights to urbanized areas. In cooperation with cities, the County should establish a Transfer of Development Credits (TDC) program to allow rural land owners to sell the development rights of their properties to land owners within community urban reserve lines or city limits.
  - 2. Providing Density Bonuses for projects with a residential component located in urban core areas.
  - 3. Reducing or waiving processing fees and/or providing priority processing for urban core projects which satisfy established density criteria.
  - 4. Planning development and road systems to accommodate public transit.
  - 5. Allowing residential clustering along transit routes.
  - 6. In low to medium density residential areas, jurisdictions should adjust existing standards to:
    - (a) Encourage a minimum of 7 dwellings per gross acre.

- (b) Allow flexibility in lot size, design, and the mix, type and size of housing.
  - (c) Allow duplexes, "granny units," and "accessory" dwellings to increase neighborhood densities within 1/4 mile of transit stops.
  - (d) Encourage clustering of lots to allow for amenities such as parks and open space.
  - (e) Encourage more intensive development within 1/4 mile of a transit stop.
  - (f) Encourage developments of more than 9-12 dwellings per gross acre within 1/4 mile of transit stops on major collectors and arterials.
7. In medium to higher density residential areas, jurisdictions should adjust existing standards to:
- (a) Encourage the development of apartments and condominiums within 500 feet of bus stops and transit stations.
  - (b) Encourage affordable housing and senior housing within 500 feet of bus stops and transit facilities.
  - (c) Discourage buildings less than two stories high in medium to high density zones.
  - (d) Prohibit subdivisions of land into lots for single-household developments.
  - (e) Discourage projects of less than 20 housing units per gross acre within 500 feet of bus stops and transit facilities.
  - (f) Prepare design plans which provide for medium to high density while still maintaining a compatible, "livable" neighborhood.
8. In commercial neighborhoods, jurisdictions should adjust existing standards to:
- (a) Discourage buildings less than 2 stories high
  - (b) Encourage developments with a floor area ratio (building floor area to lot size) of 1.0 or higher.
  - (c) Encourage developments with 50 or more employees per gross acre.
  - (d) Discourage developments with less than 50 employees per gross acre within 500 feet of a transit stop.
  - (e) Discourage residential or mixed use development of less than 15 housing units per gross acre within 500 feet of a bus stop or transit facility.
  - (f) Prohibit subdivisions of land into lots for single-household developments.
  - (g) Encourage development of residential units above ground floor commercial in the downtown core and other commercial neighborhoods.
- D. The County should adopt programs and standards that limit the subdivision of land outside of community urban reserve lines.
- E. In previously subdivided areas beyond urban reserve lines, the County should establish TDC programs to direct development to appropriate urban areas. The County should also establish programs that foster the development of clustered housing in situations where TDC is not possible.

- F. The APCD and SLOCOG should work with local jurisdictions to encourage implementation of the recommendations found in Creating Transportation Choices Through Development Design and Zoning, a guide to designing pedestrian and transit-friendly communities.

## **L-2 Providing for Mixed Land Use**

In the days before the automobile, city dwellers often lived closer to where they worked, used public transportation, and bought groceries and conducted household business within their neighborhoods.

With the advent of the automobile, housing began to spread further from areas of employment and commercial services. As a means of reducing VMT, communities should allow a mixture of land uses that enables people to walk or bicycle to work or to purchase necessary household items at locations convenient to their neighborhood.

Mixed land use is also a strategy for achieving compactness in urban development. While conventional zoning typically results in the spatial separation of different land uses, mixed use recognizes that some land uses are functionally compatible with one another and need not be physically separated. An example of mixed-use development is a ground level commercial use with residential uses above.

### ***Policy***

- *The mixing of compatible commercial and residential land uses should be encouraged when it will reduce dependence on the automobile or improve the balance between jobs and housing without creating incompatible land use relationships.*

### ***Implementation***

- A. Local jurisdictions should amend their land use regulations to include performance standards for mixing land uses within community areas. Candidate amendments to consider include:
1. Encourage neighborhood commercial uses, such as small food stores or sundry shops, in new and existing housing areas where:
    - (a) The market area of the commercial use includes only the surrounding neighborhood;
    - (b) Direct pedestrian and bicycle access is provided;
    - (c) Building and site layout are oriented to pedestrians and bicyclists;
    - (d) Parking for automobiles is limited.
  2. Develop incentives to encourage housing affordable to the work force to be developed as part of large commercial projects, and establish standards that ensure the quality of the residential environment.
  3. Require new major residential subdivisions or specific plans to dedicate and improve land for parks and recreation facilities that can be accessed by foot or bicycle from the surrounding neighborhood.
  4. Adopt programs which encourage new and existing employment centers to provide facilities designed to reduce employee dependence on private auto commuting.

Examples include on-site day care, cafeteria or food vending facilities, comfortable lunch room or outdoor eating area, employee showers and lockers, secure bicycle parking and other measures.

5. Provide safe and efficient pedestrian and bicycle connections between residential and commercial land uses.

### **L-3 Balancing Jobs and Housing**

The home-to-work trip accounts for about one-quarter of all private vehicle trips in a typical urban area; in rural areas the ratio is even higher. The length and location of these trips is an important factor in determining the type of transportation alternatives available to the commuter and the quantity of air pollutants generated. If the average travel distance between the home and workplace is relatively long, private vehicle emissions increase and non-motorized travel alternatives become less viable.

In cities and unincorporated communities in this county, there are local imbalances between job availability and housing opportunities. Job-rich communities, such as San Luis Obispo, have more land allocated for jobs than for housing all those who work there. Conversely, housing-rich communities, such as Los Osos, do not have enough land allocated to provide jobs for all residents. An imbalance between jobs and housing results in longer travel distances between home and work and, consequently, more air pollution from cars.

It may not be possible to achieve a jobs-housing balance in all communities because of their size, population characteristics or limited resources. However, it is desirable to narrow the gap between jobs and housing, or at least make sure that it does not increase.

The “1995 Jobs/Housing Balance Study,” published by SLOCOG, identifies key issues and recommends strategies to support the goal of reducing VMT through balancing the economic environment and the supply of affordable housing within the region. In addition, the study provides a good source of baseline information for jurisdictions in their efforts to achieve the goals of this measure.

#### ***Policy***

- *Within cities and unincorporated communities, the gap between the availability of jobs and housing should be narrowed and should not be allowed to expand.*

***Implementation***

- A. The San Luis Obispo Council of Governments should continue to monitor and periodically report on changes in the distribution of jobs and housing throughout the county.
- B. Local jurisdictions should adjust existing housing and land use standards to:
  - 1. Incorporate policies and programs that narrow the gap between jobs and housing, such as encouraging an “affordability match” between housing and employment opportunities.
  - 2. Include programs for affordable housing in job-rich communities.
  - 3. Provide incentives that achieve a mixture of land uses that narrows the jobs-housing gap, such as:
    - (a) Financial incentives and/or permit streamlining for commercial development within housing-rich communities.
    - (b) Density incentives and/or modification of development standards for affordable housing projects in job-rich communities.
    - (c) Priority processing of permits for affordable housing projects in job rich communities.
- C. Where a local imbalance between the number of jobs and housing exists, the regional transit provider should be encouraged to improve transit service between job-rich and housing-rich communities.

**L4 Circulation Management Policies and Programs**

The primary goal of the recommended Circulation Management Policies and Programs is to encourage the design and construction of the county’s transportation system in a manner that supports alternative travel modes and decreases reliance on single occupant motor vehicles. To this end, improving accessibility for all travelers, not just drivers, is the primary transportation objective.

**I. Promoting Accessibility in the Transportation System**

Good transit access means good pedestrian access, and ensuring such access means providing not only sidewalks, but links through and between development sites. Good access means getting transit services close to the most dense and active parts of the neighborhood, where the most people are. This is accomplished by making sure zoning provides for transit facilities and that these facilities are included in development projects when needed. Access also means eliminating or bridging barriers such as landscaping, swales, railroad tracks and other obstacles that might keep someone from walking to the bus stop.



***Policies***

- *Jurisdictions should adopt the concept of improved accessibility as a planning goal and as a means to coordinate land use and transportation planning efforts.*
- *Agencies should focus transportation funds on facilities and promotional programs that support transit, ridesharing, bicycling, and walking before focusing funds on capacity expansion for congestion relief.*

***Implementation***

- A. Jurisdictions should adjust existing standards to:
  1. Discourage gated access to, and perimeter walls around, residential subdivisions and commercial developments.
  2. Require pedestrian breaks and/or crossings at 50-foot intervals where a wall, ditch, or landscaped area separates a sidewalk from a building or one development from another.
  3. Require direct walkways between neighborhoods and any nearby stores, parks, schools and transit facilities.
  4. Require space for a bus stop or a bus pullout when requested by the transit agency.
- B. SLOCOG and local jurisdictions should update the Regional Transportation Plan, the Congestion Management Program, and General Plan Circulation Elements to prioritize transportation system improvement projects by emphasizing alternative transportation modes, traffic reduction strategies, and intermodal connectivity over roadway capacity expansion.

**II. Promoting Walking and Bicycling**

Designing pedestrian-scaled and bicycle-friendly residential and commercial neighborhoods requires a connected network of streets that form small blocks. Such a network makes walking and biking routes short and direct and allows transit to be routed closer to its customers. Sidewalks and pathways between adjacent development projects make walking safe and more convenient. Narrower streets help slow traffic to speeds more compatible with bicycling. People are also more likely to walk and bike in a neighborhood with narrow streets, wide sidewalks, trees and attractive buildings that face the street. Quality, pedestrian-friendly design is especially important in commercial and higher density residential neighborhoods, where a legacy of poor design- much more than density itself- has stigmatized some developments and hindered pedestrian and bicycle access.

***Policies***

- *Local planning agencies should encourage walking by planning for existing and new residential and commercial areas to include a safe and interconnected street system with adequate sidewalks and/or pedestrian trails.*

- *Local planning agencies should develop pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly design standards that apply to all residential and commercial projects.*

### ***Implementation:***

- A. To promote pedestrian and bicycle access in residential areas, local jurisdictions should adjust existing standards to:
  - 1. Require narrow local streets:
    - a. In low to medium density neighborhoods, one 12-foot travel lane and two 7-foot parking lanes are usually sufficient.
    - b. In higher density neighborhoods, streets should be no wider than 32 feet, including parking lanes.
  - 2. Require connected streets that form pedestrian-scaled blocks (300 feet or less in length).
  - 3. Prohibit cul-de-sacs and dead end streets except where terrain or existing conditions require them.
  - 4. If cul-de-sacs are necessary, require pathways connecting them to any adjacent streets.
  - 5. Encourage alleys for access to rear-of-lot parking lots or garages.
  - 6. Require each development project to be connected to adjacent developments via a direct (shortest possible route between buildings) sidewalk or pathway.
  - 7. Require sidewalks on both sides of every street. Sidewalks in commercial and higher density residential neighborhoods should be at least eight feet wide.
  - 8. Require minimal building setbacks (10 feet or less from the sidewalk).
  - 9. Require that buildings face and have entrances near the street.
  - 10. Prohibit rear yards from abutting a public street.
  - 11. Require that parking areas or garages be located to the rear or sides of buildings.
  - 12. Require regularly spaced street trees.
- B. To promote pedestrian and bicycle access in commercial neighborhoods, local jurisdictions should:
  - 1. Require secure bicycle parking for all new commercial development and redevelopment.
  - 2. Require all new development along existing or proposed bike routes to provide bikeway improvements along their frontage in accordance with locally adopted bike plans and State design standards. Industrial and commercial projects exceeding a defined size (e.g.- 50 employees or 50,000 sq. feet) should also be required to provide employee lockers and showers and on-site bicycle storage facilities.
  - 3. Work cooperatively to develop and adopt uniform design standards for bike lanes and paths.
  - 4. Require that buildings face and have entrances near the street.
  - 5. Encourage awnings or overhangs that protect the sidewalk from weather.

6. Require that motor vehicle parking areas or garages be located to the rear or sides of buildings.

### III. Parking Management

In lower density residential neighborhoods, oversized garages and extra-wide driveways make a street less attractive for walking. On-street parking provides additional parking space and acts as a buffer between pedestrians and traffic.

A key strategy for creating attractive higher density neighborhoods is to keep the amount of land devoted to parking to a minimum. Parking in a ground floor or underground garage is ideal, supplemented by on-street parking and small "pocket lots" located to the side or rear of buildings. Setting maximum parking space requirements, rather than minimums, is a transit-supportive approach to parking management.

In commercial areas, transit works best where parking is kept to a minimum. Parking in a ground floor or underground garage is ideal, supplemented by on-street parking and small "pocket lots" located to the side or rear of buildings. When large lots are necessary, breaking them into pedestrian-scaled blocks, complete with curb, sidewalks, and street trees, maintains the pedestrian network and sets the stage for future infill development.

#### *Policy*

- *Local planning agencies should endorse the concept of managing the supply of automobile parking as a means to support and promote the use of alternative transportation modes.*

#### *Implementation*

- A. In low to medium density residential areas, jurisdictions should adjust existing standards to:
  1. Require no more than one off-street parking space per dwelling.
  2. Allow on-street parking.
  3. Allow on-street parking or driveway parking for accessory dwellings.
- B. In medium to higher density residential areas, jurisdictions should adjust existing standards to:
  1. Discourage developers from providing more than one off-street parking space per dwelling.
  2. Allow on-street parking. (If a minimum parking requirement is imposed, allow on-street spaces to count toward the requirement.)
  3. Encourage small "pocket lots" of 30 or less spaces interspersed with buildings and landscaping.
- C. In commercial areas, jurisdictions should adjust existing standards to:

1. Eliminate minimum parking requirements, or allow 20 percent reductions in the amount of motor vehicle parking for commercial sites which have prepared trip reduction plans.
2. Require surface parking lots to be located behind buildings or interior to the block.
3. Require large parking lots to be broken up into blocks no more than 300 feet on a side, complete with curb, sidewalk, and street trees.
4. Encourage locating parking within or beneath buildings.
5. Encourage first floor retail shops on the street sides of parking garages.
6. Encourage shared parking arrangements where neighboring activities have different peak use periods.
7. Require bicycle parking near the front door of commercial buildings.

#### **IV. Transportation Demand Management**

Transportation Demand Management strategies are designed to reduce single occupant vehicle trips by providing more transportation options. This measure encourages jurisdictions to implement programs to increase the stock of commercial and industrial facilities designed to enhance the use of alternative forms of transportation. This can be done by establishing programs which encourage or require new development projects to provide facilities and amenities which support the use of alternative transportation.

Implementation of a structured, TDM-based program by the jurisdictions could also partially mitigate the negative transportation and air quality impacts associated with the planned development of commercial and retail land uses. A successful program can reduce the need for parking, thus reducing construction costs. As parking demand goes down, areas devoted to parking could be converted to more beneficial functions such as additional office or production space, a transit stop and shelter, on-site child care, bike storage, picnic areas, or other uses which, in turn, can help further the effort to reduce private vehicle trips.

##### ***Policy***

- *Jurisdictions should support actions to reduce single occupant vehicle trips by adopting programs which encourage or require new commercial and industrial development projects to provide facilities and amenities which reduce reliance on private vehicle use and support the use of alternative transportation.*

##### ***Implementation***

- A. Jurisdictions should adopt a transportation demand management program to promote consideration of TDM objectives during the design phase of new development projects.
  1. The TDM program should establish a quantifiable goal to reduce trips (employee or attracted trips) to new development (e.g. - a 20% reduction in new trips).
  2. A TDM Plan could be required to be submitted as part of the project proposal for all new, or expanding, non-residential discretionary projects over a certain size (e.g.

20,000 sq.ft.). The Plan should be site-specific for the proposed development, and include:

- a. An analysis of the expected travel behavior of employees and visitors to the site.
  - b. A description of the existing transportation/circulation system in the project vicinity.
  - c. A description of all feasible strategies that would be incorporated into the project to support on-site trip reduction efforts.
3. The TDM plan could be approved as a condition of the discretionary permit; for a project such as a commercial subdivision, the TDM Plan could be submitted for approval at the building permit stage of development.
- B. It is recommended that this program be developed in conjunction with the update of the Congestion Management Program.

#### **L-5 Communication, Coordination and Monitoring**

Implementing the measures in this section requires the cooperation of local jurisdictions. In the long term, changing land use and circulation strategies will be necessary to maintain clean air in the county. These measures can provide local jurisdictions with a framework for reducing the growth of VMT and maintaining clean air.

##### ***Policy***

- *Local jurisdictions, the APCD and the Council of Governments should coordinate actions and cooperate in pursuing the implementation of the land use and circulation management programs proposed in this document. The countywide Congestion Management Plan, the Clean Air Plan, and local General Plans should be used as a means to achieve coordinated implementation of these programs.*

##### ***Implementation***

- A. Local jurisdictions, SLOCOG, the APCD, members of the private sector and other interested community representatives should work cooperatively to:
1. Develop a strategy for addressing the jobs-housing imbalance.
  2. Develop standards for requiring large development projects to support affordable housing programs or alternative transportation programs.
  3. Develop incentives that can be applied within each community to achieve the desired jobs-housing goals in this Plan.
  4. Implement a transfer of development credits program applicable throughout the county.

## APPENDIX E LAND USE AND CIRCULATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

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5. Incorporate population growth estimates for the cities and unincorporated areas into the General Plans of each jurisdiction and into the District's Clean Air Plan to form a common basis for tracking and projecting future emissions.
6. Set priorities and a schedule for implementing the measures described in this section, with a specific phased schedule for meeting this plan's VMT objective.
7. Establish a program to monitor the jobs-housing balance.
8. Establish a program for reporting traffic counts on selected regionally significant arterial streets and at key intersections on a regular basis.
9. Establish a biennial program for calculating changes in local and regional VMT.
10. Develop other information needed to verify that the measures are being implemented and to gauge their effectiveness.